

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus comprising:

a print element for printing an indicium on a substrate, at least a portion of the indicium being printed with a first resolution; and

control means coupled to the print element for causing the print element to print at least one symbol as part of the indicium, the at least one symbol including resolution data that is indicative of the first resolution.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first resolution includes a horizontal resolution factor and a vertical resolution factor.

3. The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the vertical resolution factor is different than the horizontal resolution factor.

4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control means causes the print element to print the resolution data in encrypted form.

5. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the at least one symbol is part of a barcode.

6. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control means is operative to select the first resolution.

7. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the control means is operative to select the first resolution based at least in part on a random process.

8. A method for printing an indicium comprising:

selecting a print resolution; and

printing an indicium on a substrate, at least a portion of the indicium being printed with the selected print resolution, the indicium including at least one symbol, the at least one symbol including resolution data that is indicative of the selected print resolution.

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein selecting a print resolution includes selecting a horizontal resolution factor and a vertical resolution factor.
10. The method according to claim 8, wherein printing an indicium includes printing the resolution data in encrypted form.
11. The method according to claim 8, wherein the at least one symbol is part of a barcode.
12. The method according to claim 8, further comprising:
  - performing a random process;  
wherein selecting a print resolution is performed based at least in part on a result of the random process.
13. The method according to claim 8, wherein the substrate is an envelope.
14. A method for verifying an indicium comprising:
  - examining the indicium to determine a first print resolution characteristic of at least a portion of the indicium;  
extracting at least one symbol included in the indicium, the at least one symbol specifying a second print resolution that indicates a resolution that should have been used to print the at least a portion of the indicium; and  
comparing the first print resolution characteristic with the second print resolution characteristic to determine whether the first print resolution characteristic matches the second print resolution characteristic.
15. The method according to claim 14, wherein extracting at least one symbol includes reading a barcode that is part of the indicia.
16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the barcode is a two-dimensional barcode.
17. The method according to claim 13, wherein the indicium is a postage indicium.

18. The method according to claim 14, further comprising:
  - decrypting the at least one symbol.
19. A method of printing a postage indicium using a postage meter, the method comprising:
  - selecting a print resolution based on predetermined data; and
  - printing at least a portion of the postage indicium with the selected print resolution.
20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the predetermined data includes at least one of a calendar date, a current day of the week, a state or province in which the postage meter is located, a postal zone in which the postage meter is located, a current value of a register of the postage meter, and a random process.
21. The method according to claim 19, wherein the postage indicium includes resolution data that is indicative of the selected print resolution.
22. The method according to claim 21, wherein the resolution data is represented by a barcode that is part of the postage indicia.
23. A postage meter comprising:
  - means for selecting a print resolution based on at least one of: (a) a calendar date, (b) a current day of the week, (c) a state or province in which the postage meter is located, (d) a postal zone in which the postage meter is located, (e) a current value of a register of the postage meter, and (f) a random process; and
  - print means, responsive to the means for selecting, for printing at least a portion of a postage indicium with the selected print resolution.
24. The postage meter according to claim 23, wherein the postage indicium includes resolution data that is indicative of the selected print resolution.
25. The postage meter according to claim 24, wherein the resolution data is represented by a barcode that is part of the postage indicium.